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# STATISTICS IN FOCUS

## Population and social conditions

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# Decline in births halted in 1996

## Principal demographic trends in the EU in 1996

*After five years of decline, the number of babies born in the European Union remained stable last year (4.0 million). The number of deaths was also unchanged (3.7 million). However, due to ongoing changes in the population age profile (fewer young women, more elderly people), both total fertility and life expectancy levels increased somewhat.*

*The net inflow of external migrants decreased slightly, to just under 730 000. It is estimated that in 1996 the population of the EU grew by well over 1 million, or nearly 0.3%, bringing the total EU population on 1 January 1997 to 373.7 million.*

### Modest population growth in the EU

In 1996 the world population increased by almost 81 million. Just 4.5% of this growth took place in the more developed countries (Figure 1). The EU contributed only 1.3%, whereas its share of world population is over 6.4%. The crude population growth rate in this part of the world is therefore fairly low (Figure 2).

The USA reported a population growth rate three times that in the EU. In the USA, both natural increase and net migration are substantially higher (Tables 1 and 2). However, in most other more developed countries, population growth was somewhat lower than in the EU, and in some cases even negative (e.g. in the Russian Federation).

The population of most less developed countries continued to grow rapidly. In India, for example, the increase was six times that seen in the EU.

**Figure 1:**
**World population increase, 1996**

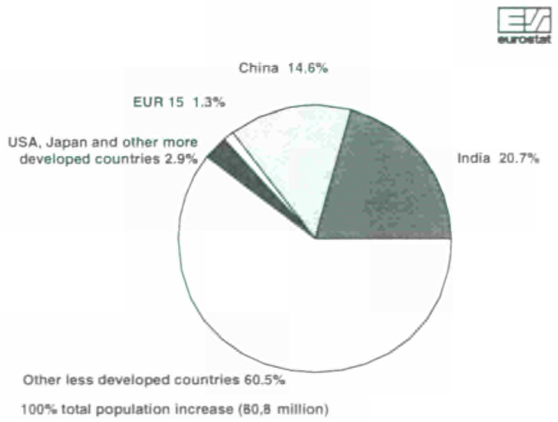


**Figure 2:**
**Population increase, 1996**

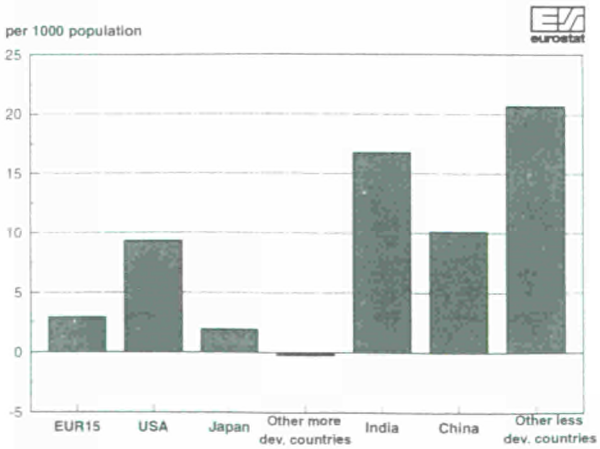


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**Table 1:**
**Population change in 1996[1]**

(1000)

| COUNTRY | Population 1.1.1996 | Live births | Deaths | Natural increase | Net migration | Total increase | Population 1.1.1997 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **EUR 15** | **372 653.6** | **4 037.4** | **3 727.5** | **309.9** | **727.7** | **1 037.6** | **373 691.2** |
| Belgium | 10 143.0 | 116.2 | 105.3 | 10.9 | 16.3 | 27.2 | 10 170.2 |
| Denmark | 5 251.0 | 67.7 | 61.1 | 6.6 | 17.5 | 24.1 | 5 275.1 |
| Germany | 81 817.5 | 794.0 | 887.0 | -93.0 | 303.2 | 210.2 | 82 027.7 |
| Greece | 10 465.1 | 101.5 | 100.5 | 1.0 | 18.9 | 19.9 | 10 485.0 |
| Spain | 39 241.9 | 352.2 | 337.3 | 14.9 | 41.7 | 56.7 | 39 298.6 |
| France | 58 255.9 | 734.0 | 536.0 | 198.0 | 40.0 | 238.0 | 58 493.9 |
| Ireland | 3 615.6 | 50.4 | 31.5 | 18.9 | 8.3 | 27.2 | 3 642.8 |
| Italy | 57 333.0 | 538.2 | 557.1 | -18.9 | 150.3 | 131.4 | 57 464.4 |
| Luxembourg | 412.8 | 5.7 | 3.9 | 1.8 | 3.7 | 5.5 | 418.3 |
| Netherlands | 15 493.9 | 189.0 | 137.5 | 51.5 | 16.8 | 68.3 | 15 562.2 |
| Austria | 8 054.8 | 88.8 | 80.8 | 8.0 | 5.0 | 13.0 | 8 067.8 |
| Portugal | 9 920.8 | 110.4 | 107.3 | 3.1 | 11.2 | 14.3 | 9 935.0 |
| Finland | 5 116.8 | 60.7 | 49.2 | 11.6 | 3.9 | 15.5 | 5 132.3 |
| Sweden | 8 837.5 | 95.3 | 94.1 | 1.2 | 5.8 | 7.0 | 8 844.5 |
| United Kingdom | 58 694.0 | 733.3 | 638.9 | 94.4 | 85.0 | 179.4 | 58 873.4 |
| Iceland | 268.0 | 4.3 | 1.9 | 2.5 | -0.5 | 1.9 | 269.9 |
| Liechtenstein | 30.9 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 31.1 |
| Norway | 4 370.0 | 60.9 | 44.2 | 16.8 | 6.0 | 22.8 | 4 392.7 |
| **EEA** | **377 322.4** | **4 103.0** | **3 773.7** | **329.3** | **733.3** | **1 062.6** | **378 385.0** |
| Switzerland | 7 062.4 | 83.0 | 62.4 | 20.6 | 1.8 | 22.4 | 7 084.8 |
| USA | 264 162.2 | 3 849.6 | 2 348.6 | 1 501.0 | 826.9 | 2 327.9 | 266 490.1 |
| Japan | 125 349.8 | 1 223.0 | 925.0 | 298.0 | -47.0 | 251.0 | 125 599.5 |
| Other more developed countries | 395 482.8 | 4 150.0 | 5 031.0 | -881.0 | 551.0 | -330.0 | 395 187.9 |
| India | 941 659.6 | 25 490.0 | 8 636.0 | 16 854.0 | -85.0 | 16 769.0 | 958 425.3 |
| China | 1 204 033.8 | 20 582.0 | 8 373.0 | 12 209.0 | -411.0 | 11 798.0 | 1 215 798.4 |
| Other less developed countries | 2 411 114.2 | 73 990.0 | 23 864.0 | 50 126.0 | -1 076.0 | 49 050.0 | 2 460 044.3 |

[1] Provisional data
* Eurostat estimate
Sources: Eurostat; US Bureau of the Census

## Migration still playing an important role

Since the mid-1980s, international migration has rapidly gained in importance as a component of population change. In 1995, immigration contributed nearly 80% of EU population growth, a new post-war high (Figure 3). Although net immigration decreased in 1996, it still accounts for the major part of population growth. Immigration is especially important for Germany and Italy. Without it, the populations of these countries would be in decline (Figure 4). Greece and Sweden are in similar situations. A recent feature of Ireland and Spain is that they attract fairly significant net immigration.

**Figure 3:**
**Components of population change, 1960-1996, EUR 15**

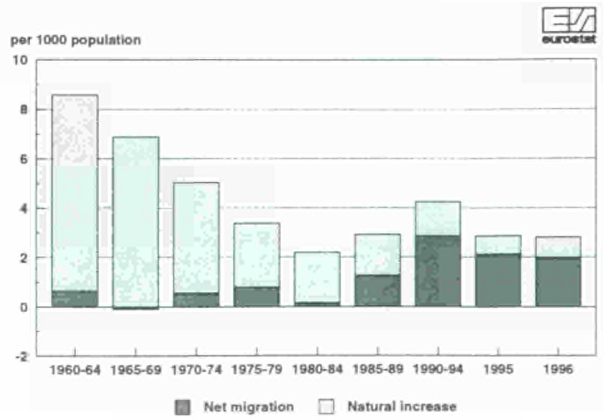



**Figure 4:**
**Components of population change, 1996**

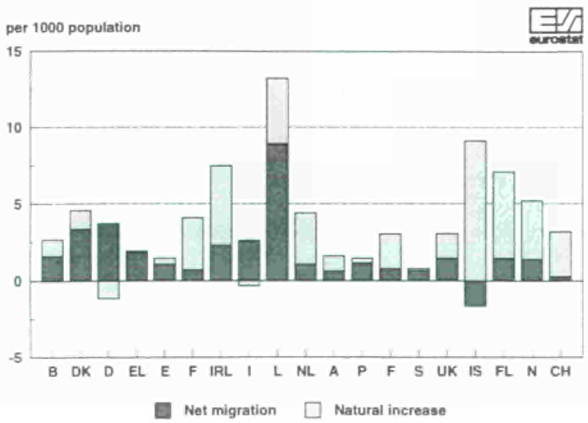


**Table 2:**
**Demographic indicators 1996 compared with 1991-95[1]**

| COUNTRY | Natural increase | | Net migration | | Total increase | | Total fertility rate | | Life expectancy at birth | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (per 1000 population) | | | | | | (children per woman) | | males | | females | |
| | 1991-95 | 1996 | 1991-95 | 1996 | 1991-95 | 1996 | 1991-95 | 1996 | 1991-95 | 1996 | 1991-95 | 1996 |
| **EUR 15** | **1.2** | **0.8** | **2.7** | **2.0** | **3.9** | **2.8** | **1.48** | **1.44 *** | **73.5** | **74.0 *** | **80.0** | **80.5 *** |
| Belgium | 1.6 | 1.1 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 1.60 | 1.55 * | 73.2 | 73.5 * | 79.9 | 80.2 * |
| Denmark | 1.2 | 1.3 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 4.0 | 4.6 | 1.76 | 1.75 * | 72.6 | 72.8 * | 77.9 | 78.0 * |
| Germany | -1.2 | -1.1 | 6.3 | 3.7 | 5.1 | 2.6 | 1.28 | 1.30 | 72.8 | 73.3 | 79.3 | 79.8 |
| Greece | 0.5 | 0.1 | 4.7 | 1.8 | 5.1 | 1.9 | 1.35 | 1.31 | 74.9 | 75.0 | 79.9 | 80.3 |
| Spain | 1.1 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 1.9 | 1.4 | 1.26 | 1.15 | 73.9 | 74.4 * | 81.1 | 81.6 * |
| France | 3.6 | 3.4 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 4.7 | 4.1 | 1.70 | 1.72 | 73.4 | 74.0 | 81.5 | 81.9 |
| Ireland | 5.2 | 5.2 | 0.1 | 2.3 | 5.3 | 7.5 | 1.95 | 1.91 | 72.7 | 73.2 * | 78.3 | 78.5 * |
| Italy | -0.1 | -0.3 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 1.25 | 1.22 | 74.3 | 74.9 | 80.7 | 81.3 |
| Luxembourg | 3.5 | 4.3 | 10.7 | 8.9 | 14.3 | 13.2 | 1.67 | 1.76 | 72.4 | 73.0 * | 79.4 | 80.0 * |
| Netherlands | 4.1 | 3.3 | 2.3 | 1.1 | 6.3 | 4.4 | 1.57 | 1.52 * | 74.3 | 74.7 | 80.2 | 80.3 |
| Austria | 1.4 | 1.0 | 5.8 | 0.6 | 7.2 | 1.6 | 1.46 | 1.42 | 73.0 | 73.9 | 79.5 | 80.2 |
| Portugal | 0.9 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.4 | 1.49 | 1.44 | 70.9 | 71.0 * | 78.1 | 78.5 * |
| Finland | 3.1 | 2.3 | 1.6 | 0.8 | 4.7 | 3.0 | 1.82 | 1.76 | 72.1 | 73.0 | 79.7 | 80.5 |
| Sweden | 2.5 | 0.1 | 3.2 | 0.7 | 5.7 | 0.8 | 1.96 | 1.61 | 75.6 | 76.5 | 81.0 | 81.5 |
| United Kingdom | 2.1 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 3.5 | 3.1 | 1.76 | 1.70 * | 73.7 | 74.4 * | 79.0 | 79.3 * |
| Iceland | 10.3 | 9.1 | -1.1 | -1.9 | 9.2 | 7.2 | 2.17 | 2.09 * | 76.3 | : | 80.8 | : |
| Liechtenstein | 6.8 | 5.6 | 5.9 | 1.5 | 12.6 | 7.1 | : | : | : | : | : | : |
| Norway | 3.5 | 3.8 | 2.1 | 1.4 | 5.6 | 5.2 | 1.88 | 1.89 | 74.4 | 75.1 * | 80.4 | 81.1 * |
| **EEA** | **1.2** | **0.9** | **2.7** | **1.9** | **3.9** | **2.8** | **1.48** | **1.45 *** | **73.5** | **74.0 *** | **80.0** | **80.5 *** |
| Switzerland | 3.2 | 2.9 | 5.9 | 0.3 | 9.0 | 3.2 | 1.53 | 1.50 | 74.8 | 75.7 | 81.5 | 81.9 |
| USA | 6.8 | 5.7 | 3.7 | 3.1 | 10.5 | 8.8 | 2.06 | 2.06 | 72.3 | 72.7 | 79.0 | 79.4 |
| Japan | 2.7 | 2.4 | -0.1 | -0.4 | 2.6 | 2.0 | 1.45 | 1.41 | 76.4 | 77.0 | 82.7 | 83.3 |
| Other more developed countries | -0.3 | -2.2 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 0.9 | -0.8 | 1.64 | 1.46 | 64.6 | 64.0 | 74.4 | 74.2 |
| India | 18.5 | 17.7 | -0.1 | -0.1 | 18.4 | 17.7 | 3.55 | 3.37 | 59.9 | 61.3 | 60.8 | 62.6 |
| China | 11.1 | 10.1 | -0.4 | -0.3 | 10.7 | 9.8 | 1.87 | 1.81 | 67.4 | 68.3 | 69.6 | 71.1 |
| Other less developed countries | 21.7 | 20.6 | -0.7 | -0.4 | 21.0 | 20.1 | 4.20 | 3.98 | 56.9 | 57.4 | 60.5 | 61.1 |

[1] Provisional data for 1996, arithmetic average for the period 1991-95
* Eurostat estimate
Sources: Eurostat; US Bureau of the Census

### The decline in fertility has come to an end

In 1995 the total fertility rate in the EU reached a new post-war low of 1.43 children per woman. The level in 1996 is estimated at 1.44, similar to that in 1994. The EU's total fertility rate therefore appears to have bottomed out after years of decline due mainly to postponed motherhood and increasing childlessness.

In Japan and most other more developed countries, similar low levels have been estimated (Table 2, Figure 5), although the rate in the USA is above 2. Most of the less developed countries recorded levels well above 3.

Over the last three years, the total fertility rate has been fairly stable in most EU countries (Figure 6), with only Luxembourg (+0.09), Spain (-0.11) and Sweden (-0.35) recording significant changes.

**Figure 5:**
**Total fertility rate, 1996**

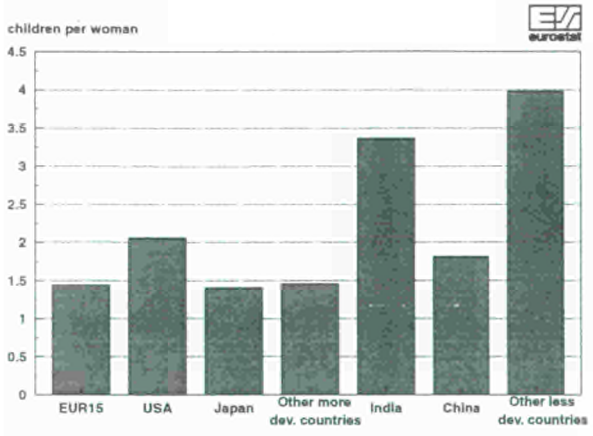
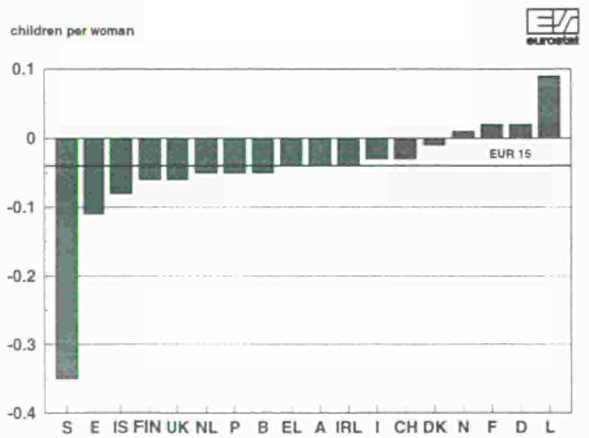



**Figure 6:**
**Total fertility rate, difference between 1996 and 1991-95**



## Life expectancy reaches new highs

After years of increase, life expectancy at birth in the EU stagnated in 1995, only to resume its upward trend in 1996. For the Union as a whole, it is estimated that all-time highs have been reached: baby girls can now expect to live an average of 80.5 years and baby boys 74.0 years.

The USA has reported levels broadly similar to those in the EU, while Japan has recorded higher levels (Table 2, Figure 7). In most other developed countries, average life spans are shorter than in the EU: the most extreme case appears to be the Russian Federation, where the average man now lives 15 years less than his EU counterpart.

Similar or even greater differences can be found in most less developed countries, although the deficit in China is relatively small, with boys living six years less than their EU counterparts and girls nine years less than theirs.

Over the last 3 years, the average annual increase in life expectancy in the EU has been about 2 months. Annual improvements of more than 3 months have been observed for Austria, Finland and Sweden (boys only) (Figure 8). There have been moderate increases of one month or less in Denmark, Greece (boys), Ireland (girls), the Netherlands (girls) and Portugal (boys).

**Figure 7:**
**Life expectancy at birth, 1996**

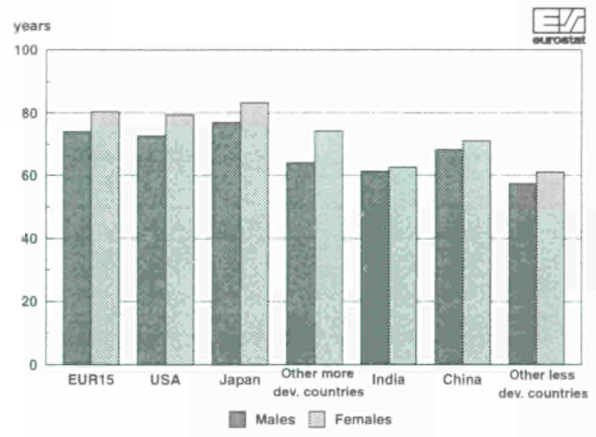
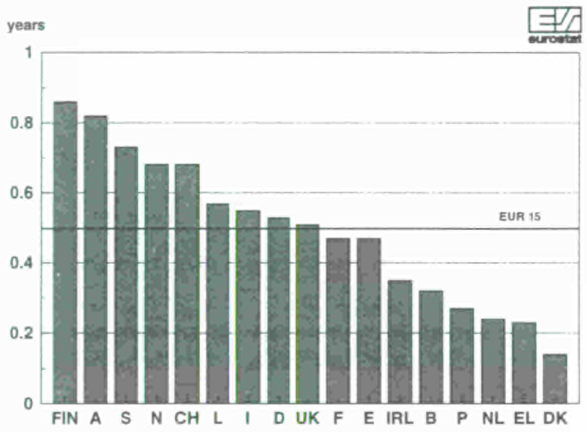



**Figure 8:**
**Life expectancy at birth, both sexes combined, difference between 1996 and 1991-95**




### Glossary

**Natural increase:** the difference between the number of live births and the number of deaths.

**Net migration:** the difference between the number of immigrants and the number of emigrants. In this publication, it is calculated by taking the difference between total population increase and natural increase.

**Life expectancy at birth:** the average number of years a person would live if current mortality rates were to continue.

**Total fertility rate:** the average number of children that would be born alive to a woman during her lifetime if current fertility rates were to continue.

**More developed countries**: all countries in Europe (including European members of the CIS-Commonwealth Independent States), Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and USA.

**Less developed countries:** all countries excluding more developed countries.

**European Economic Area (EEA):** EUR 15, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.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